

## MONEY AMONGST THE CHINESE.

Varying Standards of Value and Trading Difficulties in the Orient. Special correspondence of The Florida Star.

SAN FRANCISCO, July 25.—Chinese money, like everything else that pertains to China, seems to our eyes to be in a topsy turvy condition. Indeed, in judging China at all by the standards of civilized life, it would be well to call it the topsy turvy empire. When a country with a population five times as great as that of the United States has at least 18 different standards and values of money and has as its chief trading standard a foreign coin (the Mexican dollar), it is difficult to see how trade can be carried on at all.

Chinese merchants will take the gold coins of any nation which they recog-



CHINESE CASH.

nize, frequently by weight. They prefer gold when they can get it. When subsidiary coins are needed or used, however, the real trouble commences. Various provinces mint them and pass them into others, and these others return the compliment. But the Chinaman, being ingenious, has found counterfeiting profitable and, being suspicious, will not take coins whose authenticity he doubts. Add to this some other features of the money situation, such as debasing of the coinage by "sweating" and the use of bullion silver of varying degrees of fineness, and you can understand that banking or trading in China is not an unalloyed pleasure. Bullion silver, when used as money, frequently is shaped like a Chinese shoe and is known by that name. Its weight varies, but is usually 50 ounces. When no acceptable coin is at hand and a purchase is to be made, a piece of the shoe is cut off and weighed. Of course, the fineness of the metal is called into question and must be settled.

The copper coins, or cash, are of very small value (about one-tenth of a cent) and are made with square holes in the center. They are carried around on a string. Were it not that food is so very cheap in China it would take a very long string of them to buy a square meal. Altogether the many details of the use of money in the Middle Kingdom are wearisome to relate. Enough has been told to show that the coinage needs reform as badly as the government. To the American merchant, accustomed to a fixed, unvarying standard of value, the inevitable fluctuations in value are exasperating and retard trade. The Mexican dollar, which contains about 45 cents' worth of silver, and the Chinese tael, worth about 70 cents, constantly vary in value. In a journey of a hundred miles they may have a dozen different values, according to the many high and constantly varying rates of exchange.

Trade between provinces is also hampered by the interprovincial duties or customs. Such duties are known as likin and vary between cities and towns. These customs are arranged on a sliding scale, discriminations being made, especially against foreigners. Many attempts have been made to abolish the likin, with varying success, for it still exists. Its inconvenience may be imagined by looking at a map of China. The country is divided into 18 provinces and is intersected by a network of rivers and canals, which form the highways of commerce. How to carry on trade and still continue to pay likin when passing from one province to another become an interesting problem.

Foreigners must pay more than Chinese for everything. The ingenious Chinaman believes or pretends to believe that a foreigner wouldn't live among them if he were not rich and charges him accordingly. They have developed the system of "tipping" to an extent to make European hotel waiters blush, so much so that it is impossible for one foreigner even to visit another without paying tribute to the servants on both sides. Foreigners are charged commissions by their servants upon every mouthful they eat. The natives seem to be leagued in an enormous conspiracy to extort money from the strangers within their gates.

This system of bribing and tipping adds much to the cost of goods exported and imported. American traders have found that unless they submit to it they cannot do business in China. Chinese officials receive practically no pay from the Imperial treasury and rely upon bribes and blackmail for their income. The duties paid by merchants not infrequently never

reach the capital; they are diverted to the pockets of the collector or of those higher in authority. Therein lies one secret of the weakness of the government, for, from the highest officials down, every detail of the government of these millions of people is dependent upon blackmail. Apropos of inconveniences in trading with China, it is well to note that the most exasperating delays are often caused by ignorance of the mailing regulations and rates. China has not been a member of the International Postal union, and the rates are not uniform. They vary to and from different places. Packages of samples, catalogues, etc., are frequently sent from the United States to China with insufficient postage attached, causing great delays and annoyances. Merchants writing or sending to China should be very careful beforehand to learn whether they have affixed all the necessary postage. Otherwise, they may be certain that their mail will be delayed in transmission.

There are only two languages in general use in the Chinese trade; they are Chinese and English. The Chinese merchants, shrewd as they are, generally cannot or will not learn to use the other European languages, but many of them can read and write ours. I have just written "our" language, but the Chinese believe that Americans speak some other language than English, which they think belongs exclusively to the English. In the ports the Chinese with any connection at all with trade speak the corrupted English known as "pigeon" English, which is a mixture of a number of elements, English and Chinese predominating. All the foreign houses, whatever their nationality, must use either this "pigeon" English or Chinese in their intercourse with the natives.

Chinese contempt of foreigners extends to their language. The idea formerly prevalent in China that it is the center of the universe and that all foreign nations are tributary to it is not dead yet, and foreigners generally are regarded as inferior to the Chinese. Natives of high rank and intelligence have been heard to say that China could with her enormous population, which is one-fourth the human race, wipe out the other peoples of the earth. This feeling, while not held generally by the upper classes, is prevalent among the masses of ignorant natives, and it is at the bottom of the present trouble.

The elements of the Chinese character that have been brought into prominence by the uprising are decidedly unfavorable for foreigners. Such a thing as gratitude toward any one not of native blood is scarcely known in China. Persons who are thoroughly conversant with the Chinese character say that real converts to Christianity are ever made among them; that it is common and almost without exception for the wily Chinaman to pretend conversion in order to share in the money so generously contributed for his reform and betterment. However that may be, the mass of Chinese are certainly strongly and unchangeably opposed to the introduction of foreign religions. The only kind of missionary for whom they have even the slightest regard is the medical person, and even



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these are made to feel that they pass their lives among a hostile population who either do not feel or do not exhibit any gratitude for the labor so freely expended in their behalf.

The trouble in San Francisco, caused by the so-called "highlanders," is attributable to the fact that these men are from southern China, which has always been the most turbulent part of the empire. The people of northern and middle China, by far the largest portions of the country, are much more law abiding and quiet. The dwellers in Chinese cities live together in peace, though this may be because of the lack of room to raise a disturbance, while out of the cities, where every available foot is cultivated, crime is rare. The Chinese are perhaps the most industrious nation on earth. They have practically no idlers. Work is with them an essential of life. In the cities all men, of whatever rank in life, have some occupation. In the country the entire family—men, women and children—labor in the fields. They are most ingenious in the use of tools, and with

the rudest apparatus and material produce results astonishing to European or American eyes. They are economical to the point of parsimony. In China absolutely nothing that can be made to serve a useful purpose is wasted.

Of the honesty of the Chinese much has been said and written. They have the reputation of never repudiating a contract once it is made. It is quite probable, however, that their reputation for honesty is due not so much to innate worth as to the knowledge, gained by long centuries of experience, that honesty pays in the long run. This is susceptible of demonstration thus: A Chinese merchant or clerk never hesitates to overcharge a foreigner if he thinks that he can safely do so. A foreigner always pays for his ignorance of the language. The Chinese golden rule, as put by Confucius, is negative in form—"Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you."

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TIME TABLE NO. 27. IN EFFECT JUNE 23, 1900.

SOUTH BOUND (Read Down.)				(Read Up) NORTH BOUND.			
No. 30	No. 35	STATIONS.		No. 28	No. 32		
Daily	Daily			Daily	Daily		
4:00p	1:00a	Lv. Jacksonville	Ar	7:30p	10:16a		
5:15p	11:15a	Lv. St. Augustine	Lv	6:20p	9:06a		
5:25p	11:15a	Lv. St. Augustine	Ar	6:15p	9:01a		
5:57p	11:48a	Lv. Hastings	Lv	5:40p	8:28a		
6:12p	12:00p	Lv. East Palatka	Lv	5:35p	8:12a		
6:40p	12:30p	Lv. Palatka	Lv	5:00p	7:45a		
6:50p	11:48a	Lv. Palatka	Ar	5:45p	8:55a		
7:25p	6:58a	Lv. San Mateo	Lv	5:25p	8:35a		
6:15p	12:00p	Lv. East Palatka	Ar	5:25p	8:10a		
7:42p	1:30p	Lv. Ormond	Lv	4:55p	6:42a		
7:55p	1:37p	Lv. Daytona	Lv	4:51p	6:31a		
8:05p	1:47p	Lv. Port Orange	Lv	4:41p	6:21a		
8:20p	2:10p	Lv. New Smyrna	Lv	4:30p	6:00a		
		Lv. Oak Hill	Lv				
		Lv. Titusville	Lv				
		Lv. City Point	Lv				
		Lv. Cocoa	Lv				
		Lv. Rockledge	Lv				
		Lv. Eau Gallie	Lv				
		Lv. Melbourne	Lv				
		Lv. Roseland	Lv				
		Lv. Sebastian	Lv				
		Lv. St. Lucie	Lv				
		Lv. Port Pierce	Lv				
		Lv. Tibbals	Lv				
		Lv. Edens	Lv				
		Lv. Jensen	Lv				
		Lv. Stuart	Lv				
		Lv. Hobe Sound	Lv				
		Lv. West Jupiter	Lv				
		Lv. West Palm Beach	Lv				
		Lv. Boynton	Lv				
		Lv. Deiray	Lv				
		Lv. Fort Lauderdale	Lv				
		Lv. Lemon City	Lv				
		Lv. Miami	Lv				

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STATIONS.	No. 15	No. 17	No. 19	No. 21	No. 23	No. 25	No. 27	No. 29
	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Sun	Sun	Sun	Daily
	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	only	only	only	only
Lv. Jacksonville	7:10a	4:50p	7:00p	10:40p	9:30a	2:00p	7:00p	10:50a
Ar. Palmo Beach	7:45a	5:25p	7:35p	11:15p	10:05a	2:35p	7:35p	11:25a
Ar. Mayport			8:00p	11:40p	10:30a	3:00p		

STATIONS.	No. 16	No. 18	No. 20	No. 22	No. 24	No. 26	No. 28	No. 30
	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Sun	Sun	Sun	Daily
	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	only	only	only	only
Lv. Mayport	5:40a			9:00p	8:00a	11:00a	5:00p	
Ar. Palmo Beach	6:05a	8:10a	5:50p	9:25p	8:25a	11:25a	5:25p	9:35p
Ar. Jacksonville	6:40a	8:45a	6:25p	10:00p	9:00a	12:00a	6:00p	10:10p

STATIONS.	No. 3	No. 1	No. 2	No. 4	No. 11	No. 13
	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su	ex Su
Lv. New Smyrna	2:05p	6:15p				
Lv. Lake Helen	1:30p	5:05p				
Lv. Orange City	1:10p	4:40p				
Lv. Orange City Jct.	1:05p	4:40p				

All trains between New Smyrna and Orange City Junction daily except Sunday.

Between Titusville and Sanford.

STATIONS.	No. 11	No. 13
	Daily	Daily
	ex Su	ex Su
Lv. Titusville	7:00a	
Lv. Mims	7:18a	
Lv. Osteen	8:28a	
Lv. Enterprise	8:50a	
Lv. Sanford	9:30a	

All trains between Titusville and Sanford daily except Sunday.

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